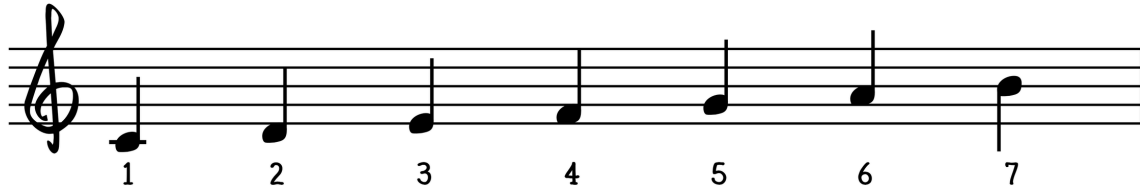


Piano Chords For Beginners

Resource Sheet

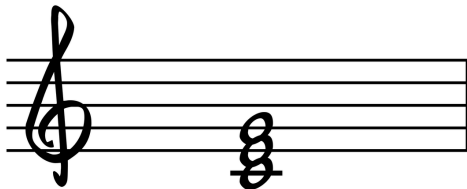


If you take a C major scale and number each note, you get the following:

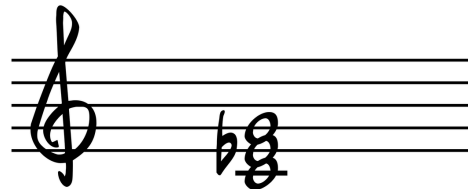


You can do this for any major scale and it gives you the framework to build any chord.

Major triad: 1, 3, 5



Minor triad: 1, b3, 5



You can also work out major & minor triads using the 'Skip Method'. To use this, play the starting note, and then 'skip' the number of notes in-between to find the next note.

Major triads are 3-2

C 1 2 3 **E** 1 2 **G**
 Db D Eb F Gb

Minor triads are 2-3

C 1 2 **Eb** 1 2 3 **G**
 Db D Eb F Gb

This method works in any key. For example, starting from A...

Major triads are 3-2

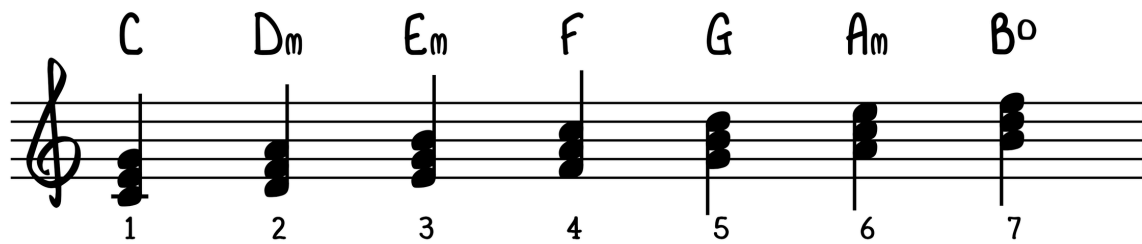
A 1 2 3 **C#** 1 2 **E**
 Bb B C D Eb

Minor triads are 2-3

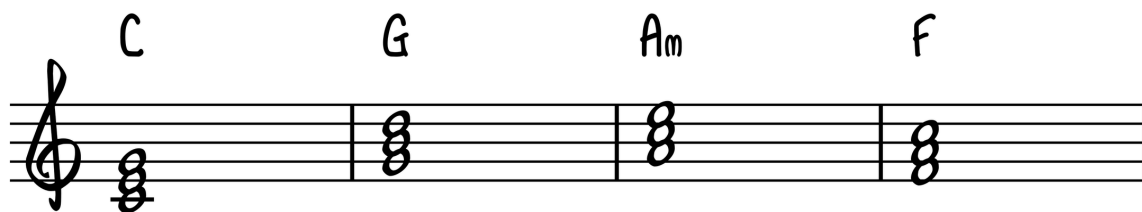
A 1 2 **C** 1 2 3 **E**
 Bb B Db D Eb



If you build a triad from every note of the C major scale, using only notes from the scale, you get this:



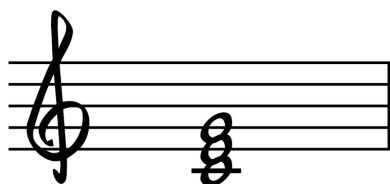
This gives you every available chord within a given key. You can mix and match these chords to create a chord progression. Here's an example of four of those chords together:



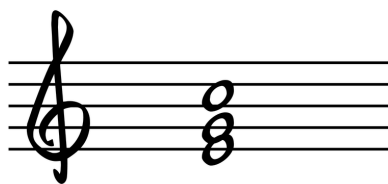
Although these chords work well together, it's a bit jumpy. Chord progressions sound best when there is as little movement between the chords as possible.

A chord is a set of notes, not a shape. There is no rule about the order in which the notes should be played. This means you can take a triad and play the notes in any arrangement. This is what is known as an 'inversion'.

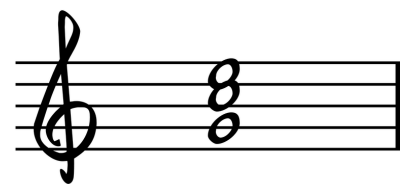
Here is a C major triad played in all possible inversions:



Root Position



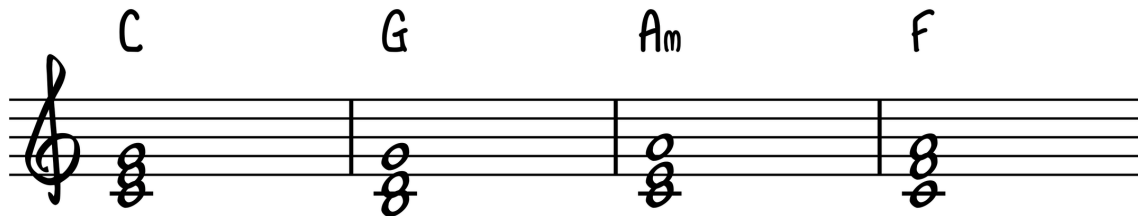
1st Inversion



2nd Inversion



If we take this idea of inversions and apply it to our chord progression, finding a way to play each chord so there is as little movement as possible between each one - you might get something such as this:



Notice how much stronger the chord progression sounds when there is less movement between the chords.

Spend as much time as possible getting familiar with these major & minor triads in different keys, creating progressions and using inversions to make them sound as smooth as possible.

Action Steps:

1. Practice building major & minor triads in as many keys as possible.
2. Pick any key and work out every chord in that key.
3. Build a chord progression from those chords.
4. Add inversions in order to play the progression with as little hand movement as possible.